

defective in this particular. But, for fully adapting the classic to our age and wants, we want new sources of decoration opening up—its own legitimate sources, but on which it has yet but slightly drawn. All nature and the regions of art and science lie open to us, but we do not sufficiently avail ourselves of them. We are too timid in invoking their genius to our aid. To assist him in his conceptions, as well as in realizing his visions of beauty, the architect, like the poet, should not be above stooping to any source; he should be happy to adopt ideas and images from any department of creation and life. "In the mire of politics, Dante and Milton selected pearls for the wreath of song." Our present art must be evolved by the intuitions of genius, and the discoveries in science,—not only from the infinite nature around us, but from all past productions of art; and the architect should examine its remains, as far as practicable for him, in all countries, with a careful eye, that from them he may gather fuel for the hive of his thoughts; remembering that excellence is not altogether confined to one period or place. There is a sympathetic effect, there is a magic in a great and fine building, no matter what the style, or how remote from what our condition of society requires, that operates upon the inventive faculties—strike the electric chain of the imagination: beauty is contagious; the soul drinks in harmony while it beholds it. "The impression," says Goethe, "which this edifice (an ancient temple) left upon me is not to be expressed, and will bring forth imperishable fruit." "A great work," says another writer, "always leaves us in a state of musing."

S. H.

THE QUESTION OF COPYISM.

If I take up my pen to say a few words in reply to Mr. Scott's last letter, it is not with any idea of continuing a correspondence, which must already have exceeded your readers' patience, but simply to attempt to answer, as far as I can, in words, a question which he as well as others have put, as to what we would propose should be done if copyism be abandoned?

It would be far easier to answer this query with the pencil than with the pen, for whatever is written must, from the nature of the thing, be exposed to the objection which forms the gist of the opposing argument—it must be *vox et præterea nihil*. In this respect the architect is more unfortunately situated than his brother artists. A painter or a poet may complete his works on his own account and risk, and present them to the public in all the perfection they are capable of, without asking any one's leave or assistance. The architect, however, cannot build either palaces of churches on his own account, but must wait till the public employ him; and even then he must not follow his own fancies, but execute the will of his employers. In every age the architect has been the servant, never the teacher of the public. Noble service he has done, it is true, but it has been at the bidding of those who held the purse-strings. It was not, for instance, the architects who revived classical architecture in the sixteenth century. It was that the authors of Greece and Rome became at that time the mania and prevailing fashion of the day,—everything that was classical was beautiful, and poetry and literature, as well as painting, sculpture, and architecture, were forced to follow in the path this new direction of the human intellect had pointed out; and, if that style still linger amongst us, it is not because the architects wish it, but because all the upper classes are educated in our public schools and universities wholly and solely in Greek and Latin literature, so that all their early and strongest associations are connected with the classical ages and the arts that then were practised.

The same is true of the present Gothic revival. The substitution of that style for the classical was not the work of the architects, but was the offspring of the romantic school, which arose at the end of the last century, especially in Germany, as a reaction against the then abhorred classical school of the French. Goethe and Scott were far more the authors of this change than any dealers in stone and

mortar that can be named. It has, however, failed as a general reaction, and Gothic castles and Gothic villas are far less frequent than they were a few years ago: the fashion in domestic architecture, at least, is fast dying out; and so, if I mistake not, it would very soon in ecclesiastical buildings, were it not that a small, but very influential party in the church—as Mr. Cobden calls them—longing for the power and influence the clergy enjoyed during the Middle Ages, hope by reviving the arts and forms of those bygone times, to accustom the people to a revival of the sacerdotal supremacy that was their concomitant. The moment the clergy perceive that by this course they are attracting only the weak and sentimental, and alienating the most earnest and powerful intellects, there will be an end of Gothic churches and the Mediæval mummies that have sprung up with them. But till this knowledge dawn on the hierarchy, the Gothic architects have it all their own way. Had they, however, lived during the last century, their art would have been as completely *vox et præterea nihil*, as is that of those who are waiting for better days.

The public must first be told that something better is possible. They must be convinced, from the experience of past ages, that it can be done by ordinary mortals; and, lastly, they must see sufficiently clearly how it can be done to enable them to direct the movement. When this is the case, there will be no want of architects to fulfil their behests; but till it be so, no progressive architect will have an opportunity of translating his voice into the substantial form of stone and lime. Even then it will not be easy: no one man can do it, nor can it be done at once. The first Gothic churches were built at the beginning of this century: there are some precious specimens at Liverpool and elsewhere,—some most painful failures; and it is only after the experience of half a century, and by the combined exertions of a great body of talented men, that we are enabled to erect the nearly perfect imitations we see every day arising around us. So it must be by the restorers of common sense to art,—they must experiment and flounder for some time before they can hope to succeed, if ever they do. I know it can be done, and see the direction in which the improvement lies; but whether it will ever be done others must decide, and time only can prove.

But to come to the point: if we abandon Greek and Gothic copying, what is to be substituted? The three following rules may perhaps make this clearer:—1st. *Design* a building wholly and solely for the purposes for which it is to be used, without the least reference to any bygone age or style; 2nd. *Construct* it with reference to the best material available; using each material—whether it be brick, stone, marble, or wood, or metal—according to its own properties, and these only, never allowing one to take the form or interfere with the province of the other; and, lastly, *Ornament* the building so designed and constructed in whatever manner you can conceive as most appropriate and most elegant, never concealing or even disguising construction or material,—only dressing them, to use a familiar phrase,—and likewise without any reference to any style, or ever looking back, but always forward,—trying to surpass whatever has been done before.

A strict adherence to these three rules, which sound almost like truisms, when so stated, has enabled every nation, in every age, except the present, to elaborate a beautiful and appropriate style of their own. It remains for some one to show why it should not do so in modern Europe.

Perhaps an instance may serve to make this clearer; and, as an example, let us take that most hopelessly prosaic of all architectural forms, a modern dwelling-house in a town, with a door and two windows on the entrance floor, and three windows on each of those above,—be there two, three, or four of them. If this form were put into the hands of a man of taste, without any prepossession, he would give the door exactly that prominence it requires, and, if ornamented appropriately, and with taste, it has been made, and may again be made, a most pleasing architectural feature. The windows of the drawing-room floor ought to be grouped together, or at all events treated as one composition, and the most richly ornamented of the whole; those of the bed-rooms

separate, and plainer, diminishing both in size and ornament as we ascend. The reveals of the windows should not be too deep, as great strength is not a necessary, or indeed a pleasing characteristic of a private dwelling, but they must not be so shallow as to give an appearance of flimsiness: balconies, of course, should be used to give shadow and prevent the whole being flat; and, above all, a cornice must crown the whole, forming the eaves of the roof,—not, of course, such a cornice as crowns a temple or a Farnese palace, but one simple and elegant, as befits a gentleman's residence, and exactly proportionate, both in projection and mass, to the greater or less solidity of the wall below it. Treated in this way with judgment and taste, a private dwelling may be made a most pleasing and elegant architectural object; far more so, certainly, than if the windows were barred with mullions or obscured with columns, or if the only merit of the composition were to look like a dried specimen of something it was not, and nobody believed it to be. It is true it would not be easy to point out in London any instance in which this has been successfully accomplished; but in Paris there are many, and in the new parts of Berlin, and especially of Hamburg, built since the great fire, there are whole streets of houses surpassing in variety and picturesqueness any produced during the Middle Ages, and possessing ten times their "firmness, comeliness, and delight." Yet even with these there is not one that might not, by study and taste, be improved upon, and I have no doubt will be ere long.

I need scarcely add, that what may be done with such prosaic things as private dwelling houses in streets, can far more easily be done with churches and public buildings, which possess in themselves many elements of architectural effect the other can never reach; and if we can surpass the Gothic architects in the one, we could far more easily do it with the other.

From the very nature of the subject, however, it is evident that it is not by words, but by facts and acts, that such a proposition can be proved. As far, however, as I can do so by words only, I have made my meaning plain to those who wish to understand it, and having done so, I must take leave for the present of a correspondence with which I have already transgressed too long,—to return to it, however, I hope, in another form on some future fitting occasion.

J. F.

DISTRICT SURVEYORS' FEES.

SIR,—With a desire that, as a body, we should stand in a fair light with the building public, I hope you will inform your numerous readers that, in November, 1846, when the subject first came under the notice of the District Surveyors' Association, and on several subsequent occasions, we strongly reprobated by unanimous resolutions the exactions (as we deem them) of one of the district surveyors.

In consequence of the feeling unanimously expressed at our last meeting, that the system pursued by the party a ludet to is incompatible with his associating himself with those whose views so totally differ from his own, he tendered his resignation as a member of the association, and it was unanimously accepted.

ROBERT HEERATH.

Hon. Sec. District Surveyors' Association.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE.—A parliamentary paper just published shows that the sum voted for the enlargement and improvement of Buckingham Palace in 1847-48 was 50,000*l.*—expended, 52,019*l.* 9*s.* 1*d.*; voted, 1848-9, 30,000*l.*—expended, 35,533*l.* 1*s.* 11*d.*; voted, 1849-50, 14,200*l.*—expended, 13,344*l.* 15*s.* 9*d.* Another memorandum, signed Carlisle, states—the total of votes for this service, from the commencement of 1846-7 to 31st March, 1850, amounts to 114,200*l.*, and the total expenditure incurred to 31st March, 1850, amounts to 112,724*l.* 6*s.* 7*d.*, in which expenditure is included the cost of constructing a new sewer in the front of the building, amounting to 2,633*l.* 19*s.* 3*d.*, and for fixtures and fittings, 1,647*l.* 13*s.* 6*d.* (together 4,280*l.* 12*s.* 11*d.*), neither of which services were comprised in the estimate of 1846-7.